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AMERICAN HAVEN MIGHT IRK SOVIET

Defector Asked Embassy in New Delhi for Help—Was Flown to Rome in Secret

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we can properly comment at this time."

This statement was intended, the officials said, as confirmation of the reports of a request for United States asylum. They said that the State Department was attempting to maintain official silence for diplomatic reasons.

Asked when and where an announcement might be expected on Stalin's only daughter's plans, Mr. McCloskey said, "possibly from her or others concerned." This indicated that the formal announcement of the defection would probably come from the country that granted asylum.

Privately, United States officials were making no attempt to conceal the fact that the woman had defected, although they were going to considerable lengths to conceal her whereabouts until she was settled in her new home. There were hints that several weeks might pass before details were disclosed. There was no immediate indication why she had sought asylum in the West.

The defection of Stalin's youngest child, who had lived in relative obscurity in Moscow since her father's death in 1953, took officials here by surprise.

They insisted that the defection was a voluntary act, with no complicity by United States agencies, although the Central Intelligence Agency became involved in arranging her secret trip from New Delhi to a hideaway outside Rome, where she apparently arrived Tuesday.

Potential Source of Strife

At one time the defection would undoubtedly have been treated as a resounding propaganda coup and have been exploited by the United States. But at this juncture, when the Johnson Administration is attempting to advance a policy of "peaceful engagement" with the Soviet Union, the defection was viewed as a potential source of acute diplomatic embarrassment.

The Moscow radio was silent—a silence duly noted by State Department officials, who were anxiously awaiting the Soviet reaction. There was concern that the Kremlin would view the defection as a serious affront, brought about in some manner by United States action.

Under normal circumstances, it is United States policy to grant asylum to persons whose lives might be in jeopardy if they returned to their homeland. It was decided at high Administration levels that in this case it would be advisable if asylum could be found in some other country.

In three days of secret negotiations, the United States arranged to have the woman spirited out of New Delhi in the middle of the night on a plane bound for Rome, to keep her hidden in a villa on the outskirts of Rome and then to fly her to the country that had agreed to grant asylum.

The defection almost failed at the outset, according to officials here, because of skepticism at the United States Embassy in New Delhi.

The officials said she had explained that she was the "daughter of Stalin" and was seeking help. The person who received her was doubtful of her identity, but after some hesitation she was taken to see Ambassador Chester Bowles.

She left New Delhi for Rome traveling on a passport bearing the name Alliluyeva, her mother's maiden name, which she used at one time as her surname. It was clear from the comments of officials that her transportation and protection were in the hands of the C.I.A.

She was accompanied to Rome by Robert F. Rayle, who is listed as a second secretary in the embassy in New Delhi. A brief biographic register is similar to those used for other C.I.A. representatives assigned to embassies.

A former Army officer and "Marketing Consultant" Mr. Rayles is listed as a Foreign Service Reserve officer, a status customarily given to C.I.A. employees. After seven years as a "marketing consultant and 'sales engineer' with Manufacturing and Research Service, he was assigned to the New Delhi embassy as an attache.

The secrecy was almost broken Wednesday when a Mutual Broadcasting system correspondent, on the basis of a report from the network's part-time correspondent in New Delhi, asked Mr. McCloskey whether Stalin's daughter had sought asylum in the United States. Uninformed at that point, Mr. McCloskey expressed ignorance and the matter was dropped.

Hints of Visit to Rome

By ROBERT C. DOTY

Special to The New York Times

ROME, March 10—In the face of total official silence, there were indications tonight that Svetlana Stalin probably passed through Rome between Tuesday and today.

Barrett McGurn, press spokesman for the United States Embassy, turned aside all inquiries as to the whereabouts of Stalin's daughter with the words "I have no information to give." Italian Foreign Ministry and airport authorities also said they had no information.

A woman accompanied by a

man and carrying a Soviet passport made out in the name of A. Alliluyeva—Alliluyeva was the name of Svetlana Stalin's mother—was reported to have boarded a Qantas Airways flight in Delhi early Tuesday bound for Rome. The flight made one stop, at Teheran, and arrived in Rome at 7:45 A.M. Tuesday.

Rome airport policemen said their records disclosed no passenger named Alliluyeva among those leaving the plane here. This proved nothing since it would have been a simple matter for those escorting Mrs. Singh to have provided her with another passport, in another name, from one of the many nations whose citizens enjoy visa-free entrance into Italy.

Rome Departure Reported

The Rome newspaper *Giornale d'Italia*, quoting unidentified "most authoritative sources," said the Soviet dictator's daughter left Delhi Wednesday for Rome. The article said it "seemed" that she had a false passport and that she left Rome this afternoon aboard a United States Government aircraft put at the disposal of the embassy here.

There are several Italian airfields from which a Military Air Transport Service plane could leave without exciting notice.

The newspaper added the detail that, "according to certain reports," Stalin's daughter had been dressed in a blue outfit. During her stay here, it said, she was a guest at Villa Taverna, the residence of the United States Ambassador G. Frederick Reinhardt.

It seemed more likely that she would have been accommodated in some less conspicuous and socially active embassy quarters where a visitor would be less subject to notice.